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DN EXTRA

October 2005

Campbell quits

SCIE chief to return to campaigning

TV troubles

Digital switchover fears

Capital concerns

Social services funding at risk



DN EXTRA...

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printing

Aeromino Ltd
 Tel: 01895 676567

Published by Scope

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Law will affect thousands

BY JOHN PRING

The government has underestimated how many people with mental health problems will face compulsory treatment in the community if its new Mental Health Bill becomes law, according to a new report*.

The King's Fund says the number of people facing community treatment orders (CTOs) could reach 13,000 over the next ten to 15 years, although it will not "open the floodgates" as some campaigners have claimed.

The government has estimated there will be about 1,450 people in England and Wales on CTOs in the first years of the act. The bill is expected to receive its first reading this year.

The report also warns there will be pressure on the resources of community mental health services and the tribunals that will need to authorise CTOs.

Simon Lawton-Smith, the report's author, said: "There is a strong likelihood that the numbers of people placed under compulsory community treatment will increase year-on-year. This has been the experience of almost all other countries with similar systems."

But the Department of Health (DH) has claimed the study is "flawed" and criticised the "lack of quality data and weakness in the analysis".

A spokeswoman said the new legislation would target the small proportion of "revolving door"

hospital patients who were prone to "cycles of discharge, relapse and readmission".

Richard Brook, chief executive of the mental health charity Mind, said one of its "grave concerns" about the bill had been "the probability of far too many people being swept up into compulsory treatment in the community".

He said: "Mind believes that the bill could induce fear of compulsory treatment into the many ordinary people with mental health problems, driving them away from seeking the help they may desperately need."

*A *Question of Numbers* is available at £7.50 from tel: 020 7307 2591 or free from www.kingsfund.org.uk/publications



Driving up standards: Triple British Superbike champion, John Reynolds (left), talks to Spencer Hemstock at last month's launch of a road safety scheme for young disabled people. You Can Drive Too teaches young people with mobility impairments about assessment centres, vehicle adaptations and safety.

For more information or to book a free presentation, tel: 0115 901 5893 or visit www.dsa.gov.uk

DVLA's blunder

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) has apologised after they stopped a blind man from Lincoln registering his car in his own name.

The DVLA admitted it had made "a mistake" after Tony Grant, from Lincoln, complained he was barred from registering his own car at a local DVLA office because the insurance was in his wife's name.

Mr Grant said he explained that, being blind and a non-driver, he would have to pay three times the premium if the insurance was in his own name.

He had to register the car in his wife's name.

He said: "Without a valid driving licence or a personally named insurance certificate, DVLA have disallowed me from owning a vehicle."

"What if I didn't have a wife? Would I then have to register the vehicle in the name of a friend or work colleague?"

But a DVLA spokesman said Mr Grant's insurance certificate should have been enough to register in his own name and a mistake had been made.

The spokesman said: "Provided a certificate of insurance shows the registration mark and a written explanation is provided about the circumstances, then the insurance certificate is acceptable."

On the cover: Luke Nadin, is a member of a joint team from Victoria School and Purbeck School in Poole, which beat more than 200 UK schools to win the Kielder Challenge Cup last month. His team triumphed in the six-team final in Kielder Forest, Northumberland. Each group of eight 13 to 16-year-olds included disabled and non-disabled members and had to complete a series of team-building and problem-solving tasks.

For details of the 2006 Kielder Challenge or an entry form, write to: *The Kielder Challenge*, 88-90 North Sherwood Street, Nottingham NG1 4EE, tel: 0115 9486926 or visit www.fieldfare.org.uk/kielder-challenge.htm

London faces cuts

BY JOHN PRING

Services for disabled people in London will face huge cuts in government funding if changes to a grant formula go ahead, according to council leaders.

The government is consulting on changes to the formula it uses to calculate grants for local government.

But its proposals could see London's share for adult social services, including disabled adults, fall by £150 million a year in 2006/07, almost one fifth.

The Association of London Government (ALG), which represents London's 33 councils, says in a new report* that the proposed changes are coming at a time that the city faces "an unprecedented increase in need", with disabled people making up about one fifth of London's population.

Even if the "least damaging" range of options is introduced next year, London could still lose £250 million in its social services funding share, it says.

Sir Robin Wales, ALG chair, says: "What is clear from the current funding consultation is that we are in danger of being led by the output of statisticians rather than the actual needs of our local communities and the service demands that our councils face.

"The government should ensure that changes are not introduced unless it can clearly demonstrate that they reflect what is happening on the ground."

A spokesman for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister said: "The whole purpose of consultation is that they can make their views known on it."

*Don't Let London Lose Out, available from www.alg.gov.uk or tel: 020 7934 9999



It takes two: Student James Butcher transforms the common room at Henshaws College in Harrogate, with the help of volunteer Sarah Wass, from PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Staff from the accountancy firm turned decorators to deliver a one-day makeover to the common room and barbecue area of the college for visually impaired students.

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TV switch fears

BY ELIZABETH CHOPPIN

More practical strategies are needed to protect disabled and older people in the switch from analogue to digital television, according to an independent consumer panel of the communications watchdog, Ofcom.

After Culture Secretary Tessa Jowell's announcement last month of the timetable for the switchover, which is set to be rolled out between 2008 and 2012, the panel demanded a more in-depth explanation of how support will be given to the estimated 4.4 million households who may need it.

The installation of complicated TV equipment, protection against "rogue traders" and cost concerns all deserve closer attention, the panel said.

An Ofcom spokeswoman said she was disappointed that recom-

mendations made to the government in an earlier report, such as using grass-roots organisations for support in the switch, had not been incorporated into the plan.

She said: "We're not saying the switch is all wrong – it isn't. But this is not just about policy assessing. It's also about practical support. We feel that we need more detail about how the switchover will happen."

A spokesman for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport said the plan was still in "the early stages" and had mainly been outlined in principle.

He said more specifics would not be available until after further discussions with the BBC and a trial in Bolton had been completed and analysed.

He added: "We've been quite clear we still have more work to do. This is a very large undertaking."



Blooming success: Volunteer Gabriela Gallardo joined MP Sir Malcolm Rifkind to celebrate St Mary Abbots Rehabilitation and Training's 20th birthday last month.

The Kensington and Chelsea charity has helped more than 1,500 people with mental health problems live more independently through work, training, volunteering and social activities.

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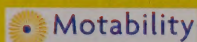
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Campbell quits to campaign on rights

BY PRIYA KOTECHA

A leading figure in the disability rights movement has quit her post to give herself freedom to campaign against moves to legalise assisted dying.

Jane Campbell (*right*) said she resigned as chair of the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) because she wanted to campaign on issues of "human rights and life and death decision making" and "return to the forefront of the disability movement".

Ms Campbell, one of the founders of SCIE, steps down in March 2006 after five years, a year before her term was due to expire.

Before she joined SCIE, she was co-founder and director of the National Centre for Independent Living and was a prominent figure in securing direct payments for disabled people.

She said: "I feel that I've done what I can do at SCIE and I do only have so many years in which I can accomplish everything else I want to."

"I want to take the expertise I have acquired from SCIE back



into the disability movement and speak out on issues I feel passionate about."

After five years at SCIE, she now wants to "speak out as an individual", and highlighted the proposed assisted dying legislation that is set to return to the political agenda next year.

She said: "I feel that's an area that is very tricky and I want to be there to influence that."

She said her proudest achievement at SCIE had been to involve service users "in every part of the organisation".

She said: "We can truly say that we are an inclusive social care institute. We don't only speak it, we do it. It's reality."

Easy leaflet will help

A new leaflet aims to help people with learning difficulties understand the services provided by their community chemist.

The leaflet*, illustrated by simple pictures, also encourages people to ask their pharmacist questions about the medicines they take.

It has been published by the independent Ask About Medicines campaign, with the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) and the Norah Fry Research Centre.

Research carried out by the Norah Fry centre revealed last year that people with learning difficulties lacked knowledge

about why they were taking drugs, what they were for, and what the potential side-effects might be.

Sue Osborn, joint chief executive of the NPSA, said: "We are delighted that this leaflet has been produced and believe that it will encourage people with a learning disability to seek advice from pharmacists about their medicines. It is a very practical solution to a long-standing problem."

*Getting to know your pharmacist, free from the Department of Health order line, tel: 08701 555 455, quoting reference 40587, or download from www.ask-aboutmedicines.org



Former Conservative MP Michael Portillo has become the new president of DebRA, a national charity for people with the skin condition epidermolysis bullosa. The journalist and broadcaster is shown with Melissa Smith (*left*) and Gemma Sturgess, who both have the condition.

YOUR GREATEST GETAWAYS

Next spring, DN will publish a series of holiday specials to help you book your summer break. We are looking for your experiences to help other readers make the best choices. We want to hear of breaks in the UK, Europe and beyond and experiences good and bad. We are interested in all types of accommodation, days out and places to eat. To tell us your story, email: sarah.hobson@scope.org.uk or tel: 020 7619 7324. You can also write to Disability Now, 6 Market Road, London N7 9PW.

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Blocked aisles and risky ramps

Since *DN* asked readers whether the DDA had changed their lives as part 3 had its first anniversary in October, we have been swamped with stories. Here are some of the latest

Somerfield has recently taken over from my local Morrisons supermarket and it's has been very difficult to move around the shop in my scooter. Goods have been displayed on the floor so I can't reach over to get to products on shelves and staff won't stop what they're doing to help you get to the produce.

There have been displays in the middle of aisles, the trolleys are too big for the shop and there is only one checkout suitable for my scooter, but it's always closed.

I complained to managers, but they just seemed to dismiss me. I then went to the local authority. After a visit from one of their officers, managers moved some of the displays but there are still problems.

Eric Slater, Preston Pans, East Lothian, Scotland

I live in a rural village called Griffithstown in Portypool, and as a wheelchair user with severe multiple sclerosis, I have difficulty accessing my local shops. I have to travel three quarters of a mile along a busy main road because there are no drop kerbs. The council says it does not have the money to remove them at the moment.

Then I can't access the shops because there are steps. Some of the shops have a bell, but no sign to ring for assistance, and why should I have to discuss my personal business in the street in the rain?

I gave all the shops a letter asking what they proposed to do about accessibility. The attitude was "that's not up to us to do that", "we've got a bell" or "knock on the window".

The DDA isn't working.
Ann Pitchforth, Wales

I haven't been able to travel out of Malvern under my own steam since I started living alone four years ago, because of inaccessible coaches, buses and trains, and nothing has changed recently. Nor am I able to go for a drink or eat a meal in a restaurant or pub in Malvern, or use an accessible toilet afterwards. The only place accessible on my own where I can eat, drink and use an accessible toilet is Malvern Theatre.

Adrienne Hill, Malvern

My wife is a wheelchair user and my arthritis does not allow me to do many stairs.

In Kircaldy where we live in Scotland, the branch of WH Smith has no access to the upper sales floor.

The only "reasonable adjustment" offered is to bring goods down, but my wife, who is an artist, likes to browse and handle brushes, for instance. After complaining, Smiths said £6 million had been spent on access for disabled people, but that does not help us.

Laurie Richards



JAMIE TROUNCE

In August, my husband, a wheelchair user, and I visited Telford and noticed a weatherproof coat in the window of JJB Sports. The coats were in the basement so we tried to use the lift. It was very small, so I opened the door for my husband and used the stairs. The ramp to get out was quite steep. If I had not been there he could have easily tipped his wheelchair over. There were no staff on this floor. It was so difficult to get back in that a young boy had to help. I emailed the head office and told them about the problems. I have not even had a reply.

Pauline Simpkins, West Midlands

I am supporting a wheelchair user who has been trying to get a ramp outside Otley Library for five years. Freda Naylor and her husband Malcolm have approached Leeds City Council several times but have been told the building is listed and it is not policy to use temporary ramps for health and safety reasons. The council said Freda could go to a library further away or use mobile facilities. After months of letters and offers of conciliation from the Disability Rights Commission, which the council refused, court papers were issued. The council soon put plans in place for a ramp, but Freda will pursue the case for discrimination.

Tim McSharry, Leeds Access Committee

Just do not take NO for the answer. The law is on our side now. Write to head offices or phone them and keep on doing it. Buildings being listed is no longer a reason. Just keep asking. Get in the local paper too – that really helps!

Elizabeth, Tenterden, Kent

For further examples, or to add your own DDA stories,
www.disabilitynow.org.uk/living/other/ddaayearon.htm

Art in the right place?

Last month, Marc Quinn's sculpture of a pregnant Alison Lapper was unveiled in Trafalgar Square. Here, members of the public and our readers tell us what they think of the 3.5 metre high statue

"I think this is very inspiring and long-awaited. It's about time we had a positive image of a disabled person/mother/parent. We need a lot more like this."

Selina Scott, London

"I think it's fantastic. It's profound actually, because there's such an extreme reaction to the female form when it is naked, because there are so many associations to do with sex. It's wonderful to see that she's a sexual being, although it's not the first thing being drawn. The statue allows us to be so diverse on the imagery. I'm really excited."

Gaby Agis, London

"I find it too large and rather brutal, but then I guess it is in keeping with the style of sculptures already in Trafalgar Square. However, as a disabled woman I feel it is great that our sexuality and our bodies can be celebrated and enjoyed and hopefully inspire and challenge the preconceptions of others."

Rose, London

"I think it is awesome. Why should a statue of Alison not be viewed in a prominent public place any more than she should hide herself away? Her and her statue are big, brave and proud."

Annie Bishop, Northumberland

"I think it's fantastic! A naked disabled woman in Trafalgar Square! That's what I call freedom."

Gill Smith, Kent

"It's really wonderful. It's an inspiration to us all."

Maz Ryan, Staffs

"Think it's amazing. Alison Lapper's words said it all... disability has always been in the background. It is fantastic, inspirational and deserves to be there."

Kate Hodgkison



"It's incredible, I don't have words, the artist is a master. For disabled people this is very important. When I see it I think I have my two hands and my two legs but I can never do what Alison has done."

William Arevalo, Chile

"We think that she should have been clothed so that the beauty is her and not because of her nudity. The trouble is that this just shows that the only way to get disability noticed is by degrading people. A better way would have been a wheelchair standing alone, which could do more to get everyone thinking about disability"

John and Debra Cassidy, St Leonards-on-sea, East Sussex

"It's definitely a good thing for disabled people. Art has a way of transcending taboo – as with comedy – and this statue will make people face their opinions about disability, positive or not. It's a talking point and that's great!"

Phoebe White, London

"I think the statue is a beautiful piece of art and shows her beauty as a woman and as a mother. I am a disabled woman and I'm sadly unable to have children, but when we were trying I was told I would not be a capable mother. Ms Lapper has been a terrific mother; we should all be proud of her."

Wendy Kennett, Middlesex

"I think the statue is good, but it's in the wrong place. Trafalgar Square should be reserved for historical statues."

Philip Hutcheon, London

"It's a challenge for both of us, makes us have a different view of disabled people and really makes you think. We saw it in the news and decided to have a look at it and we're happy that we did."

Donald and Jennna Adosinaba, from Kent

"It conveys a very beautiful message of how lots of different bodies can still be beautiful. It's making something visible that people don't want to know about. It's challenging views of disability and sexuality."

Jyll Bradley, London



PRIYA KOTTECHA

For more views about the statue or to add your own opinion, visit www.disabilitynow.org.uk

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LAND ROVER DISCOVERY 2.5 Tdi 5 door, R Reg (Oct 97), 100k miles, alloy wheels and tyres 1 year old. Sunroof, e/windows and e/mirrors, air con, 12 CD player, pas, MOT. 5 seater, with Turney swivel seat for front passenger and rear hoist for wheelchair user. £5,500 ono. Tel: 01223 313941 (Cambridge).

CHAIRMAN ESCORT 1.3 M reg, 34k miles, July 2006, taxed Dec 2005, Gowrings conversion with lowering suspension. £2750. Tel: 01223 871294 (Cambridge).

Cont'd pg11

DEADLINE

Disability Now November 2005
published 29 October.

Classified deadlines:

Booking: 14 October. Copy: 18 October.

Support for disabled people

If you have a disability or health condition that affects your chances of finding or keeping a job, ask to see a Disability Employment Adviser. Disability Employment Advisers are based in Jobcentre Plus offices and Jobcentres and offer a wide range of advice and support. They can help you find a job, or stay in work if you are already employed.

The specialist service that Disability Employment Advisers provide, includes:

- advice on finding and keeping a job
- support with benefit entitlement and programmes like New Deal, and
- advice to employers on employing disabled people.

Find out what additional help you can get by visiting our website.

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Jobseeker Direct: 0845 6060 234

Textphone: 0845 6055 255



jobcentreplus

Including Jobcentres and social security offices

Medical Device Specialist

c.£20,000, BLACKPOOL

The Medicines & Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is an Executive Agency of the Department of Health. Our Device Technology and Safety Division employs a mix of professional, technical and administrative staff, and protects public health and the interests of users by ensuring that medical devices meet appropriate standards of safety, quality and performance, and conform to relevant National Regulations and Directives of the European Union.

This role is based at the purpose built Wheeled Mobility and Seating Centre in Blackpool, a modern, self-contained unit in its own grounds, with good facilities for the disabled and the present team of eleven. It is the primary source of expertise within MHRA for wheelchairs, seating and associated equipment, and incorporates a test laboratory for wheelchairs which is accredited by UKAS.

Your job will be to work as part of a team investigating adverse incidents, providing quality, technical and safety-related advice, and helping in the set up and testing of wheelchairs and seating. This will include assisting in regular reviews of adverse incident investigations, identifying alternative approaches to resolving recurring problems, as well as advising Government Departments, users, healthcare professionals and manufacturers on device safety and quality.

You'll need a relevant degree, good interpersonal skills, and the ability to work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary team. This, combined with an organised and methodical approach, an understanding of the Medical Devices Regulations, and a desire to develop your expertise in this area, should make you an ideal candidate.

Please note that the full salary range for this role is £18,940-£27,320, accompanied by a benefits package that includes 30 days holiday plus 10 1/2 days public/privilege days, flexible working and civil service pension scheme.

If this challenge inspires you, further details and the MHRA application form are both available on the jobs section of our website www.mhra.gov.uk. Please send your completed application forms via email to jobs@mhra.gsi.gov.uk or by fax 020 7084 2522. We strongly encourage electronic applications.

Closing date: 21 October 2005.

As an Equal Opportunity employer the Department welcomes applications regardless of gender, race, disability or sexuality. We operate flexible working patterns within a non-smoking environment.



MHRA
Medicines and Healthcare products
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Information Officer

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SCIE's aim is to improve the experience of people who use social care services. By gathering knowledge from diverse sources, people and organisations, we develop and freely share resources and best practice, to support people working in the social care sector and to empower service users.

As a member of the Knowledge Management team the role covers a wide range of social care subject areas and has a two-fold focus. Firstly, project scoping - you will carry out research using on and off line resources, liaising with subject experts, producing written reports and supporting resources as required. Secondly, systematic mapping - you'll help to develop and implement this innovative technique within SCIE, focusing on using online search criteria, screening, retrieving and keywording results, producing analysis and completing map reports.

Your current knowledge of systematic mapping processes may be basic or advanced. However, what you must demonstrate is the potential to develop your skills in this area, and have a proven ability to carry out and critically appraise research. You will need a degree or postgraduate qualification in Information Science, Knowledge Management or a related discipline, and at

least three years' research or information science experience. You'll also require excellent searching and research skills and a good understanding of the social care sector.

Please visit www.scie.org.uk/recruitment/dn for more information and an application form.

If you don't have access to the web, and require a hard copy, you can email recruitment@scie.org.uk or call **020 7089 6884** (textphone: 020 7089 6893) quoting ref. 14/DN. Packs are available in alternative formats upon request. Closing date: 5pm, 24 October 2005.

If you are disabled and want to know more about our employment opportunities then call our dedicated confidential disability recruitment advice line, hosted by Sabre Employment, on **020 8305 6076** (24 hour answering service).

We value diversity in our workforce and are committed to equal opportunities. Disabled candidates who meet the essential criteria are guaranteed an interview.

social care
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VW SHARAN CARAT 2.8, P reg (1996), Automotive Group conversion incl rear ramp, seats 6 including wheelchair, Windsor blue. Good condition, pas, fsh, MOT December 05, 54k miles. Changed circumstances force sale, £3,950 ono. Tel: 01325 720154.

PEUGEOT 806 GLX TDHDI 2.0. Fitted with Constables attendant Car Chair and automatic lift system on front passenger side. Seats six. Reg Feb 02. Only 10k miles, one owner, excellent condition. Metallic royal blue, manual with power steering, diesel, climate control air conditioning, radio/CD player. Full MOT Feb 05 and tax. £12,500. Tel: 020 8449 2416.

CHAIRMAN CITROEN BERLINGO 1.8D S reg. 42,000 miles. Gowrings conversion to carry wheelchair plus 4. Good condition. £3,500. Tel: 07793 282891 (Wolverhampton).

FORD FOCUS SPECIAL Edition Ebony Hatchback. Bargain as new showroom condition less than 1500 miles - still under full manufacturers warranty. Panther Black, 1.6, 3 door, L Reg (May 2003). Aircon, CD player, 5 months tax. CarChair electric wheelchair system specially fitted by Ford and Constables Mobility designed to provide wheelchair users with up-front travel in a saloon car. Package cost over £20,000. Price £14,750. Tel: 01789 773820 (Warwickshire).

NISSAN PRAIRIE 2.4, K reg (1993) with full Brotherwood conversion incl rear entry floor ramp, raised roof, transfer beam for front passenger. Carries 5 including wheelchair. Pas, 97k miles, MOT expires May 2006. In very good condition, only one owner from new, fsh, £1,500 ono. Tel: 01227 765246 (Canterbury) or mobile: 07956 061605.

CHAIRMAN RENAULT KANGOO 1.2 16 valve, 03 reg, 8k miles, pas and c/locking. Rear ramp, lowered floor and extra seat with electric belts. £7,995 ono. Tel: 01948 860906 (Chester) or mobile: 07966 468295.

ELAP SWIVEL AND and slide car seat (Black with blue patterned inset) on base to fit Ford Galaxy nearside rear passenger seat. Base can be traded in for base to suit other vehicles. Excellent condition. Hardly used. £100 ono. Tel 01652 653569. (N. Lincolnshire).

FIAT MULTIPLA 1.6ELX, 1 year old, dark blue, 4k miles only, fully serviced, CD/radio, e/windows and sunroof. Brotherwood conversion incl wheelchair in 'front passenger position, 2 other passenger seats in rear, wheelchair entry through ramp at rear. In immaculate condition, genuine reason for sale, £15,900 ono. Tel: 07973 319493 (based near Oxford).

RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 1.2, Jan 04, 12k miles, Constables lowered floor conversion. 1 rear seat, carries 4 incl driver, wheelchair access through rear via ramp. E/windows and e/mirrors, CD player, silver, only one owner from new, in excellent condition, £8,950 ono. Tel: 01501 741885 (West Lothian).

FIAT FIORINO 1.7 diesel 1997 (R) electric winch 4 seater. Excellent condition, £2,995. Tel: 01788 521019 or 07831 383575.

CITROEN BERLINGO 1.8 with Brotherwood conversion incl ramp, carries wheelchair plus 4 passengers (incl driver). 84k miles, S reg, air con, pas, e/windows, central locking. MOT expires December, in moderate condition and only one owner from new, £3,000 ono. Tel: 01278 782180 (Somerset).

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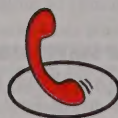
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